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**Subject:** Response to 3/1 Hearing on SB 769 RE: Child Welfare Investigations of Minors

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Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice Chair Robinson, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

Below are the responses to questions raised at the 3/1 hearing on SB 769 regarding Child Welfare investigations against minors for child abuse. I have included Child Welfare Interim Director, Aprille Flint-Gerner, to this email in the event that you have additional questions or would like to schedule a time for an in-person or virtual meeting before Wednesday's scheduled work session.

**1. Research on the response from child protection agencies in other states when a minor is identified as the perpetrator of child abuse.**

See attachments:

- The Casey Family Program – Other State Responses
- The Casey Family Program – Teen Parents
- Evident Change – Other State Definitions

**2. What other systems are in place if child abuse investigations were not conducted by Child Welfare of minors with problematic sexual behaviors?**

Local Law Enforcement/Juvenile Justice System

Child Welfare cross-reports all screening reports assigned or closed at screening to local law enforcement agencies in alignment with ORS 419B.015, 419B.017 and 419B.020.

When criminal investigations are conducted by local law enforcement agencies both the county district attorney's office and county-based juvenile departments may become involved.

When a report involves a minor under the age of 12, law enforcement can write a report to the county juvenile department, which is equipped to assist with assessments and services.

#### County Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT)

County Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Teams are developed by the district attorney of each county to conduct investigations and assessments related to child abuse. Pursuant to ORS 418.747(1), the teams must include but are not limited to law enforcement personnel, ODHS child protective services workers, school officials, staff from local health and mental health departments, child abuse intervention center workers if available, and juvenile department representatives, as well as others specially trained in child abuse, child sexual abuse and rape of children investigation.

#### Problematic Sexual Behavior in Children Committees (PSBCs)

PBSCs are local bodies that respond to referrals from ODHS of cases in which a child under the age of 12 is allegedly engaging in problematic sexual behaviors. PBSCs currently exist in Washington, Clackamas, and Multnomah Counties. See attached Washington County PSBC MDT Protocol as an example.

#### The Oregon Youth Development Council (YDC)

The YDC was created by HB 4165 (2012) to develop state policy and administer funding that supports the educational success of youth ages 6 through 24. The YDC's mandate is to help youth who face barriers to education and the workforce get back on the path to high school graduation, college and/or career. Key areas of focus for the YDC are juvenile crime prevention and the reduction of high-risk behaviors among youth.

### **3. To what degree was law enforcement involved in allegations against minors 14-17?**

The data shows that of the 300 founded allegations against minors by Child Welfare in 2021 and 2022, local law enforcement conducted a concurrent criminal investigation on 93%.

<b>Abuse Type</b>	<b>Total Founded Allegations Against 14-17 year old by Child Welfare (2021 &amp; 2022)</b>	<b>Law Enforcement Investigated</b>	<b>% of Allegations LEA Investigated</b>
Sex Abuse	228	219	96%
Neglect	16	9	56%
Physical Abuse	19	19	100%
Threat of Harm	37	32	86%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>93%</b>

**4. What percentage of investigations of minors are founded after investigation?**

Child Protective Service assessments conducted on 14 to 17-year-olds in 2021 and 2022	1366
Founded Allegations	300 (22%)
UTD Allegations	15 (1%)

**5. Will there be an increase in investigations against parents/caregivers if Child Welfare stops investigating minors for child abuse?**

No. Child Welfare will continue to assign investigations of parents and caregivers only when there are concerns that the parent or caregiver is unable or unwilling to ensure their child's safety.

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